

A SALUTE TO JOHN D.

More than 50 years on and still going strong, "Old Man" John D. Kaupiko was saluted in OCC member Margie Stone's "Miracle Mile" column recently. It is reprinted here courtesy of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin.

The Old Man, they call him. Old Man John D. (for David) Kaupiko.

They call him that because he's one of the genuine 14 carat old-timers on the beach, and not because he's old. He's been part of the Waikiki scene for half a century.

Right now he's very busy, particularly when the sun starts edging over toward the Waianae area.

That's the hour for canoe practice, and John D. in his orange straw cap is over on the Ala Wai honing his Hui Nalu boys for the Oahu championship tomorrow.

And then his crews will point for the big one, the Territorial championship races at Nawiliwili, Kauai, August 2. This year it's named the John D. Kaupiko Territorial Championships.

The Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association is paying honor to a man who has done the full measure and then some for Hawaii's kingly sport.

For more than 20 years John D. has been coach and skipper for Hui Nalu, a club with no clubhouse but a venerable history.

Many of the canoe coaches throughout the Territory today first learned to assume the "ready-all" under his tutelage.

As one ex-paddler put it, "I think you could say he's a sort of symbol of outrigger canoe racing in Hawaii. You know those kids of his think he's wonderful. They all call him Daddy."

"Well," says John D., as he intently watches his 13 and unders take a fast quarter mile down the canal,

"this paddling sure keeps them out of mischief."

"We give them a real stiff workout every afternoon. Then they get home at night and boom, they hit the sack. They're too tired to go out.

"Sometimes they get a little lazy. Then we tie a tire on the bow like a lei. You've really got to pull when you're dragging that along."

John D. has almost 100 boys in training on the canal. They pay just \$1 for the season's racing, earn their own expenses for the big trip to Kauai.

Even as a great-grandfather the Old Man looks as trim and fit as when he was swimming in Mainland competition, 1911 and 1913, with a Hui Nalu teammate by name of Duke Kahanamoku.

"This," he smiles, gesturing at the youngsters sprawled along the bank waiting their turn in the battered practice canoe, "is what keeps me up."

When racing season's pau, Hui Nalu becomes dormant. Today the Club of the Ocean Wave has, besides John D., only two other tangible assets.

One is its famous "We Love You, Hui Nalu" song, an almost guaranteed throat-lumper if you've ever heard the alumni on the beach roaring it out in full voice.

And the other is its sole racing canoe, White Horse. It's the same canoe John D. learned to paddle in back in 1911.

Hui Nalu was formed in 1908, primarily as a swimming club.

"We'd meet at the old Manoa bath house (now gone) and we'd paddle against those big six-foot Hawaiian fellows from Moanalua and Kakaako," John D. recalls.

"If we won we'd get some pineapples, or maybe a chicken or a pig for a prize. That's how racing started."

For decades Hui Nalu and the neighboring Outrigger, formed the same year, kept the sport alive be-

tween them. Its present popularity, with nearly 1,000 youngsters in training this season, is only post-war.

In all the years, John D. has never tired of the beach. From 1927 to 1940 he ran the umbrella concession.

"I started out with 10 and sold out with 300," he says. "I haven't

been to the Mainland since I've lived right here in W 40 years. Sure, I still sur time."

Nor does his interest in ever diminish. He's going Maui next month to see if prod the Valley Islanders i ing a club too.